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Thesis

MORALS AND MANNERS
IN BEN JONSON'S COMEDIES

by

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MORALS AND MANNERS IN BEN JONSON'S COMEDIES

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MORALS AND MANNERS IN BEN JONSON'S COMEDIES

Since the words morals and manners are both rather abstract in their meaning, I am going to define them as concretely as possible, with particular reference to their use throughout this thesis. I am interested in morals as the conduct or habits (of people), not as lessons told by stories. Manners, almost synonymous with morals, I shall define as the practices of society. Thus, the customs of Jonson's contemporaries, as they are presented in his comedies, are to be treated. I propose to do this by isolating the customs to which Jonson refers and discussing each one in turn, using, as well as Jonson's comedies, other authorities on Elizabethan customs. Therefore, upon completion of this work, I shall have attempted to acquaint my reader with the behavior of the Elizabethan people and with Jonson's interpretation of it.

Drama is particularly conformable to the study of morals and manners, because we find that drama itself grew out of one of the oldest practices of society, religion. The ancient Greek drama developed from the ceremonies which were performed by the Greeks in honor of their god Dionysus and the goddess Demeter. This Dionysian ceremony, a festival to celebrate the wine god, was at first a communal celebration participated in by the entire community in which it took place. It was a choral dance and chant in which the worshipers or actors wore

costumes befitting the occasion, probably goat skins. Later it became feasible to have a leader for the chorus who would play the most important part or leading rôle. This protagonist may at times have actually assumed the guise of Dionysus. The dialogue of the drama probably came from the epic reciter combined with the chorus. With Aeschylus we find the addition of a second actor, and with Sophocles a third. This may seem irrelevant, but we must bear in mind the fact that these early Greeks were imitating the actions of a god, and we are going to delve into the imitations of people in later drama.

Drama became extinct during the so-called Dark Ages for a period of approximately one thousand years. Imitation was left to the jongleur and to one or two pagan celebrations of the cruder sort which seemed to hang on. But once again religion was to evoke the dramatic instinct, the wish to imitate. The priest was the protagonist imitating phases in the life of Christ at each mass which he sung. At Christmas and at Easter, the two great religious festivals of Christians, we find simple drama. At Christmas, a single chorister announced to the congregation the birth of Christ. At Easter time, three priests took the part of the three Marys in a very simple dialogue. Gradually this simple procedure grew, went beyond the church to the church yard, and finally the miracle was given to laymen to enact. These laymen began to incorporate secular stories in the religious drama, and at the same time, they became more professional in their acting

until a certain group of workers were doing one particular episode in the life of Christ, each successive year, so that drama was completely removed from the priests to the guilds.

In turn, after we have found that drama grew out of a custom of people, we find that drama became a vehicle to imitate the behaviour or customs of people. We can hardly call the problem in Oedipus Rex by Sophocles a representation of a custom of the Greek people. On the other hand, Sophocles has given us certain of the customs of the Greeks. He tells us of their method travel, "...a man seated in a carriage drawn by colts..."[1] In the character of Teiresius he tells us about the Greek soothsayer. Creon approaches with a crown of bay on his head, which signified good news to the Greeks.

Turning to the early English drama, we find again that the customs of people are portrayed. In Noah's Flood, a miracle play of the Towneley cycle, we find the shrewishness of Noah's wife well portrayed in the manner of medieval English custom, rather than according to biblical source:

Wife. Now, as ever might I thrive, the worse I thee see!
Do tell me belive, where has thou thus long been?
To death may we drive, a life for thee,
For want.
When we sweat or swink,
Thou does what thou think,

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[1] Brander Matthews, ed., Chief European Dramatists (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1916), Oedipus the King by Sophocles, trans. by R. C. Jebb, p. 43.

Yet of meat and of drink
Have we very scant.[1]

In The Second Shepherds' Play we have a good glimpse of the English shepherds playing jokes as they did in those days, with just a smattering of the religious element which was originally intended.

Now that we have followed the growth of the drama from the simple religious celebration to the point where it is portraying customs of society contemporaneous with its production, we should stress the fact that morals and manners are interpreted very differently by various dramatists in the same period as well as in different ages. We have been discussing drama as a whole, including both comedy and tragedy, but from this point we are going to discuss only comedy for the following reason.

Comedy, or the comic element, is really nothing more nor less than incongruities, particularly those found in human life. When we perceive a tall man having an argument with a very short man, we laugh, because there is something incongruous about their appearance. Equally risible is a child imitating an adult, for here again we perceive the incongruous.

Since this perception of the incongruities of human life is the basis of comedy, authors will find their subject

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[1] John S. P. Tatlock and Robert G. Martin, edd., Representative English Plays (The Century Co., New York, 1916), Noah's Flood, p. 7.

matter for comedies in the imperfections of human nature; for we can readily see that the perfect human being would never do anything incongruous. He would rise at the exact moment that his alarm clock went off (a deed which is almost incongruous enough to make us laugh) and his day would proceed in such a normal and well balanced fashion that it would be utterly lacking in humour. It is the defects in men's characters, their vicious and silly behaviour, which provide the material for the dramatist who writes comedy.

Let us see how the Greek dramatist Aristophanes makes use of this factor in comedy of the fourth century B.C. In his Frogs he takes divine and famous characters, well known to his audience, makes them act and speak out of keeping with their usual manner. Bacchus comes down from his pedestal to ask Hercules,

> Were you ever seized with a sudden passionate longing
> For a mess of porridge?[1]

Aeschylus and Euripedes have a trial at law over their respective dramatic merits. The very chorus is incongruous, being composed of frogs whose reiterations are nonsensical croaking sounds incongruously defying the tradition of the Greek chorus.

In early English drama, referring again to The Second

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[1] Tatlock and Martin, op. cit., The Frogs by Aristophanes, p. 88.

Shepherds' Play, we find this incongruous element the basis of comedy. The situation in which we find Mak's wife, Gill, in bed with a sheep instead of a baby beside her was particularly laughable to the English audience.

In later English drama the great comedy writers, Sheridan and Goldsmith, appeal to their audiences with incongruous situations. In *She Stoops to Conquer* the situation in which Marlowe and Hastings treat their host as an innkeeper through Tony Lumpkin's deception is particularly ludicrous because of its inconsistency. Demanding a glass of punch of one's host is so unusual as to be comic.

Today it is still the unreasonable which appeals to the theatre-goer who desires comedy. The idea of a dignified English butlers becoming king of a tropical island, as Crichton did in Sir James Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton*, is especially incongruous and comical.

It would be well to point out here that all dramatists do not treat this incongruous element in the same way. Some comedy writers are sympathetic with the situations which they create; others are decidedly satirical in their interpretation of morals and manners. Aristophanes was satirical in his acute criticism of Euripedes, rather than sympathetic towards him. The composers of *The Second Shepherds' Play* were in sympathy with the chicanery of Mak and Gill, as was Goldsmith with *The Mistakes of a Night*. Barrie was neither wholly

sympathetic nor wholly satirical in writing The Admirable Crichton. He was mildly derisive concerning class and caste, but he was in sympathy with the situation as it worked out on the island with Crichton, the butler, as king.

Thus far we have shown, firstly, that incongruity is the basis for comedy, people with imperfections being incongruous, and secondly, that the dramatist may be simply showing us the unreasonableness in people for the amusement of the audience. We enjoy seeing our imperfections in others. Hearing an actor say, "I really must cut down on my smoking" pleases us, for we frequently say the same thing ourselves. On the other hand, the dramatist may be bitter regarding the habit of smoking; he will satirize the "butt fiend" in an attempt to reform that custom in his fellow men.

Before considering the question into which one of these categories, sympathizer or reformer, Ben Jonson falls, we must look at the treatment of some of his contemporary dramatists to see whether they ridicule or enjoy Elizabethan society.

What does Shakespeare think concerning the morals and manners of the Elizabethans? Shakespeare was primarily interested in the plot or story; he fitted his characters to his plot. This fact alone should be enough to show us that he was not writing to pass judgment on his fellow men. In his chronicle play Richard the III we may say to ourselves what a horrible, vengeful being Richard is, but we do not feel that

Shakespeare is showing us the crimes of Richard simply to give his audience a concrete example of what the vice, avariciousness, can make of man. No, we are interested in Richard as a horrible character, not as a lesson, to make us forget that Aunt Mehitable has a fortune to leave. Othello is not a play to show us jealousy at its worst; Othello was even given some justification for his vice by Shakespeare. We laughed with the fat and greedy Falstaff, rather than at him. In Macbeth the drunken porter is very amusing, a relief scene for the tragedy. In Much Ado About Nothing Shakespeare liked his rebellious Beatrice, and he makes his audience feel real admiration for her. Shakespeare treated the manners of his characters with sympathy, for the most part, not with satire.

> Thus he moralized as nature does by letting all her creatures breed and show their traits. She pastes no placards upon things which advertise themselves to the observer. All our infirmities have the freedom of Shakespeare's verse to display themselves at pleasure.[1]

He is not taking man's faults and emphasizing them, making a character example of one particular vice, but rather he is being honest in his representation of human nature. We can safely say, I believe, although the length of this thesis will not allow a fuller proof, that Shakespeare was not a reformer of society.

Thomas Dekker was insulted by Jonson as Hedon in Cynthia's

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[1] John Weiss, Wit, Humor, and Shakespeare (Roberts Bros., Boston, 1876), p. 65.

Revels and did not get along amicably with him, although they collaborated on the plans for speeches and entertainment to celebrate James's accession to the throne. Dekker was more amused than disgusted with the customs of the society of his time. We can see his sweet temper in The Shoemaker's Holiday. Dekker was interested in middle class society. It is not defects in Margery Eyre's character at which we laugh, but rather at her very words, her repetition of "but let that pass." We laugh at her aspirations to high society. Dekker is not satirizing social climbing when he lets Margery plan her wardrobe for the better days when her husband shall be Master Sheriff. Simon Eyre is not representing one humour or one vice, but he is rather portrayed as a real man. There is no satirical undertone in Dekker's works; he appreciates and finds amusing the follies of society.

Beaumont's and Fletcher's treatment of comedy is particularly apt in a thesis concerning Jonson, since they were both admirers of Jonson, which may have been enough to draw them together for their great dramatic collaborations. Both Beaumont and Fletcher wrote verses to Jonson commending his Volpone, and yet, when we look at one of their typical comedies, The Knight of the Burning Pestle, we find a satire quite different from Jonson's. Their satire is not intended to reform, but to make us laugh. Citizen's wife makes us laugh with her ideas of what a play should be, but we do not feel that the authors were trying to correct the simple tastes of a middle class

audience. When Citizen's wife complains of the tobacco smoking which goes on near her, we feel that this is not a reform device, but simply a means to evoke another laugh from the audience.

The life of Ben Jonson is not very well known, and fuller accounts are based on unreliable sources. This is rather a surprising fact insofar as Jonson compiled his own plays so that they would be assured of being handed down to posterity. We would thus expect him to have written an autobiography as well. However, since we cannot rely solely upon his prefaces and dedicatory messages, we shall have to give a brief account of his life, particularly those portions of it which might have a bearing upon his ideas concerning the society of his age. (Gifford[1] and Palmer[2] are the sources for the following information.)

Jonson's grandfather was a man of some means and was for a time in the service of King Henry VIII. In consequence Jonson's father was probably about the court, and we are not surprised that Jonson himself found favour with the court, that he wrote masques under the direction of both Elizabeth and James and that he was particularly liked by James, perhaps through the success of his part in greeting James to the

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[1] Lieut. Col. Francis Cunningham, ed., *The Works of Ben Jonson* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1904), William Gifford's Memoirs, Vol. I.

[2] John Palmer, *Ben Jonson* (George Routledge and Sons, London, 1934).

throne. James subsequently made Jonson poet laureate.

Benjamin, or Ben (as he preferred to call himself), Jonson was born probably in Westminster in 1573 or 1574. He was born after his father's death, but his mother remarried, a bricklayer, and either through her efforts or his stepfather's Jonson was sent to school in St.-Martin-in-the-Fields church. Later, a friend sent him to Westminster, where William Camden was the headmaster, greatly respected and admired by Jonson. From Westminster he apparently went at once to the University, St. John's College at Cambridge. Financial conditions forced him to leave before his course was completed. Exactly how long he remained there is not known. At any rate, we do know from his works that he was very well acquainted with classical literature; he adhered more closely to the classical style than did any of his contemporaries. He had probably expected to be established by the church, but instead we find him turning temporarily to his stepfather's craft, that of bricklaying. Then he volunteered his services to the British army and went to Flanders where a campaign was in progress. While he was there, his stepfather died, and it may have been for that reason that he returned to London. Upon his return, like many of the men of letters of his day, he decided that the stage offered a likely livelihood. He may have gone about the country with a group of strolling players, or he may have affiliated himself with some theatre in London.

About this time an unknown character (possibly an actor named Gabriel Spenser) challenged Jonson to a duel after a heated discussion, and Jonson, not averse to the idea, participated and mortally "wounded his man." Jonson was then thrown into prison, whereupon he changed his religion and became a Roman Catholic, either through the efforts of a priest who visited him at the time, or through indifference to religion on his part. On his release from prison, Jonson married a shrewish but honest (faithful) woman. He was probably married not later than 1592. The rest of Jonson's life is of negligible interest to us in connection with his regard for the morals and manners of his contemporaries. Suffice it to say that Jonson had very strong likes and dislikes, and it is this very characteristic which makes his works an excellent index to the morals and manners of his day. Later, after we have proceeded to inspect his ideas on Elizabethan customs, we shall be able to decide whether Jonson, like Shakespeare, was being true to human nature, or, like Dekker, was sympathizing in a kindly way with his *dramatis personae*, or was reforming society and its vicious customs as he saw them.

Before discussing the actual customs as they appear in his comedies, we must go into a rather full study of Jonson's plot construction, since it is upon this factor that he bases his interpretations of the customs of society.

In contrast to his contemporaries Jonson adhered fairly closely to the unities of Greek drama, or the so-called

Aristotelian unities. The unity of action is the only one formally stated in Aristotle's treatise, which unity, on the whole, Jonson seems to ignore throughout his comic dramas. These three unities are (1) the unity of time, (2) the unity of place, (3) the unity of action. These unities are well known because of the fact that many dramatic critics believe them to be the essence of true mimicry. In other words, if the theatre-goer sees a play which is consistent with the three unities, he will identify himself with the actors, and thus his escape from reality, which, according to psychologists, is necessary for the human mind in distressing civilization, will be more complete. Since we know that Jonson had a good education in the classics, we would expect him to utilize the structure of classical drama to a certain extent.

> But great Achilles, Agamemnon's acts,
> Sage Nestor's counsels, and Ulysses' slights,
> Tydides' fortitude, as Homer wrought them
> In his immortal phant'sy, for examples
> Of the heroic virtue. Or, as Virgil,
> That master of the epic poem, learn'd
> Pious Aeneas, his religious prime,
> Bearing his aged parent on his shoulders,
> Rapt from the flames of Troy, with his young son.[1]

He tells us in his rules for dramatic writing that the poem must have an entire and perfect action "and that this action should not exceed the compass of one day." Turning to the induction to Every Man Out of His Humour, the dramatist tells us in the words of Cordatus that comedy started as a "simple

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[1] Ernest Rhys, ed., Ben Jonson's Plays (Everyman's Library, E. P. Dutton and Co., New York, 1910), The New Inn, Vol. 2, p. 441, Act I, Sc. 2.

and continued song sung by only one person." It was supplemented by succeeding classical authors according to their own judgment, so Jonson says, "I see not then, but we should enjoy the same license or free power to illustrate and heighten our invention as they did; and not to be tied to those strict and regular forms...."[1] Jonson does not insist on the unity of place, not mentioned by Aristotle, but he does place his action in one locality in most of his plays. Let us take Volpone to illustrate the way in which Jonson adheres to the unities. We find that the action takes place in Venice, one city, although Jonson does not confine it to one house in the city. The scene shifts from Volpone's house in Act I to St. Mark's place in Act II, thence back to Volpone's house (Sc. 2), to Corvino's house (Sc. 3), to a street in Venice in Act III (Sc. 1), to Volpone's house (Sc. 2), and to various passages, closets and chambers in his house for the remainder of the Act. In Act IV the action is again on a street in Scene 1, and in Scene 2 the setting is in the Senate House. In Act V the first scene returns the action to Volpone's house. Scene 2 is a hall in Sir Politick's house, Scene 3 takes place in Volpone's house, Scenes 4 and 5 are different parts of the same street, Scenes 6 and 8 take place in the Senate House, and the intervening Scene 7 is again on the street. Notwithstanding these many changes of

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[1] Op. cit., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, induction, p. 65.

scene, we must bear in mind that Jonson has confined his setting to one locality, Venice. As to the unity of time, Jonson tells us himself that the action should not exceed one day in its duration. Although we are given no program with the actual time changes, as we would be today, presumably the scheming action takes place in one day. Volpone decides one morning to dupe his would-be heirs:

> Volpone. ...Now, now my clients
> Begin their visitation! Vulture, kite,
> Raven and gorcrow, all my birds of prey,
> That think me turning carcase, now they come,
> I am not for them yet....[1]

The tricks continue through the day until Volpone himself is caught in the trap and is sent to prison to pay the penalty.

As for unity of action, a brief explanation of what we mean by this will be necessary before we can attempt to pass judgment on Jonson's use of this unity. "It (the play) must deal with only a single story; and this obligation is the Unity of Action."[2] In Volpone Jonson does stick more closely to the unity of action than in the other comedies, but, on the whole, I believe that he pays little or no regard to this unity. Volpone, an old and wealthy Venetian noble, is duping the legacy hunters who are after him. Volpone profits by his feigned illness, because his would-be heirs vie with each other to see who can please the "dying" man the most with rich gifts. Now

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[1] Op. cit., Vol. I, Volpone or the Fox, p. 408, Act I, Sc. 1.
[2] Brander Matthews, A Study of the Drama (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1910), p. 275.

if Jonson had made this duping the "single story" of his play, had brought it to its conclusion with the betrayal of his master by the treacherous parasite Mosca, then we could say that Jonson was heeding the unity of action. But Jonson is not satisfied with such a simple dénouement. Volpone hears of the beautiful wife of one of the fortune hunters, and with the aid of a disguise, sees her and desires her. As a result a new scheme is hatched whereby Mosca goes to the fortune hunter and tells him that the only way Volpone's life can be prolonged is by having a beautiful young woman sleep near him to lend him her vigor. Naturally Corvino is impatient for Volpone to die, but he must keep in Volpone's good graces; so he finally consents to lend Volpone his wife, being told by Mosca that this will surely make him Volpone's heir. At this point another character, Bonario, son of Corbaccio, another fortune hunter, is introduced. He is told by Mosca that his father has disinherited him and made Volpone his heir in hopes that Volpone will reciprocate. This time Mosca is telling the truth, but Bonario goes to Volpone's house to make sure. He hears the cries of Corvino's wife at the mercy of Volpone, rushes in to the rescue, and decides to take the crime to court. This, of course, would be very awkward for Volpone; so Mosca gets the legacy hunters to testify in behalf of Volpone and against Bonario and Corvino's wife. Corbaccio is glad enough to testify against his disinherited son, Corvino would not want his wife's accusations believed, and Voltore, a lawyer and another

heir expectant, is quite willing to do a service for Volpone. At the court Volpone succeeds in persuading his victims that he is now on the point of death. They hasten to his house to find that he has apparently finally fulfilled their wish and died. But Mosca is the heir. Much dismayed, Voltore reverses his evidence which he has given in court in order to expose Mosca. Meanwhile Volpone is alarmed at the turn of affairs, and in disguise whispers to Voltore that Volpone is not dead, whereupon Voltore returns to his first evidence. But Mosca, not averse to his present situation, asserts that Volpone is dead. The only way in which Volpone can assure them that he is not is to throw off his disguise. The whole trick is then explained, the two honest people, Bonario and Corvino's wife, are cleared, and the rest get their just deserts.

This lengthy dissertation on the story of Volpone may seem unnecessary, since we could simply discuss the question with the simple answer that Jonson disregards unity of action. But based on this lack is Jonson's difference from contemporary dramatists, and this makes a study of his comedies so apt concerning the morals and manners of his time.

The reason for this lack of unity of action lies in the fact that Jonson is portraying in general the humours of men; we frequently allude to his comedies as "comedies of humour." To define a humour, as Jonson interpreted it, we would do well to quote Asper's words in Every Man Out of His Humour.

Asper. Why, humour, as tis ens, we thus define it,
To be a quality of air, or water,
And in itself holds these two properties,
Moisture and fluxure: as for demonstration,
Pour water on this floor, 'twill wet and run:
Likewise the air, forced through a horn or trumpet,
Flows instantly away and leaves behind
A kind of dew, and hence we do conclude,
That whatsoe'er hath fluxure and humidity,
As wanting power to contain itself,
Is humour. So in every human body,
The choler, melancholy, phlegm and blood,
By reason that they flow continually
In some one part, and are not continent,
Receive the name of humours. Now thus far
It may by metaphor, apply itself
Unto the general disposition:
As where some peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
All his affects, his spirits and his powers,
In their conflictions, all to run one way,
This may be truly said to be a humour.
But that a rook, by wearing a pyed feather,
The cable hat-band, or the three-piled ruff,
A yard of shoe-tye, or the Switzer's knot
On his French garters, should affect a humour!
O, it is more than most ridiculous.[1]

Jonson says that even as medieval superstition had it that a man who had an over abundance of blood was sanguine in his disposition, so a man may have a peculiar quality such as greed in Corvino (Volpone), which, like the medieval humour, will affect his entire disposition; his thoughts and actions will all move in accord with this one humour.

In order to expose the various humours, Jonson chooses one which is particularly odious to him and embodies it in a real character. We must not, however, get the wrong impression that Jonson was writing allegorical plays. He was not,

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[1] Ben Jonson's Plays, induction Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 62.

because Jonson does not lose sight of the fact that he is creating flesh and blood characters, who think and act as human beings, and not simply concrete images of various vices. Having chosen a humour and a character to fit the humour, Jonson must then conceive of episodes and situations in which the deeds of his character will expose the humour which possesses him. Jonson says that a poem must have a beginning and an end, which he proceeds to give it by linking his episodes together with a plot. This plot is fairly consistent throughout his comedies, resolving itself into two groups of characters, the victims and those who victimize them, or the biter bit. Being a victim did not exempt a character from having a disagreable humour, as we shall see when we look over the plot in Volpone.

Volpone and Mosca were the victimizers. The chief victims were Corvino, Corbaccio, and Voltore and Lady Politick Would-be, all possessed with the humour of greed; two other victims, later proving to be the victimizer's opposition, were the honest Bonario and Celia, Corvino's wife. As for the minor characters, we have Peregrine, an Englishman who ridicules the follies of Sir Politick Would-be who considers himself wise in matters of finance and politics. As we saw above, the victims all exhibited the humour or vice of avariciousness, and it is the rôle of the victimized group to dupe these vicious people and bring them to their just ends. Thus, we are going to have a group of episodes in which a humour is made

apparent, and then the persons possessed by it fall into a trap.

We have shown how Jonson starts first with the humour, proceeds, secondly, to the character, and finally to the plot, whereas his contemporaries treat comedy in the reverse fashion, starting with the plot and then adapting the characters to the story. It is clear, then, that we see or read a comedy by Jonson with an eye for the characters rather than for the story. The tricks with which he scornfully exposes his victims are clever and amusing, but they develop and unfold with no fluctuation such as we find in a romantic comedy like Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice, where we watch the rising and falling fortunes of the characters almost as we would read a thrilling mystery story, wondering what will happen next.

Now that we have discussed the manner in which Jonson constructed his comedies, we can proceed to the actual Elizabethan life from which he took the morals and manners which he discusses so trenchantly in his comedies.

We must begin with a brief historical background of this outstanding and cultural period. I shall call this the Elizabethan Age because, although Jonson wrote during the reigns of James I and Charles I too, his works are primarily concerned with what we term the Elizabethan Age, broader in its literary duration than the Queen's actual reign.

This age, the latter part of the sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth century, might properly be called the height of the Renaissance period in England. The Renaissance

or new birth, which started in Italy some two centuries before it crossed the Straits of Dover to England, was a revolt against medieval customs and conventions. People began to have new interests, a different, less-biassed outlook on life, and they delved into the classical way of doing things as they never had during the Middle Ages.

In Italy the rebirth had taken its form in arts. In general, pictures retained their religious subjects. Giotto (1276-1337) is no longer adhering to convention when he portrays the look of real human greed on Judas' face when he accepts the money for the betrayal of Christ. The literary Renaissance in Italy began with Dante, who was first to look back at the writings of the Greeks and Romans with reverence.

So in England we see the trend of the Renaissance movement towards the intellectual and literary, as in the new models of poetry by Wyatt and Surrey after the Italian style.[1] The date when Caxton set up his printing press in England, 1476, is the customary date applied to the beginning of the movement there. With printing there came a unity in the written language anyway. Some medieval ideas of science still remained, but we shall see that Jonson had advanced ideas concerning the vestigial superstitions. In our Elizabethan age we find the spirit of the Renaissance blossoming forth in all its

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[1] Robert Shafer, ed., From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy (Doubleday Doran and Co., New York, 1924), Vol. I, pp. 303-308.

glory. The English people were thinking for themselves. They no longer wanted Catholicism for their religion; so when Elizabeth succeeded Mary, she really had no alternative but to give Protestantism her stamp of approval. This finally caused strife between England and Catholic Spain, but when England, at great odds, was able to conquer the Armada, history was made and the Englishman became bloated with a new sense of his importance. Education was no longer left to those who desired an ecclesiastical life, so that many more Englishmen were literate than had been previously.

Here, I think, we should draw an analogy between our age and the Elizabethan age. Today many of us are inclined to feel that this period is of great importance. Our many new inventions, the radio, the automobile for more facile travel, electric illumination, lead us to pity the benighted individuals of preceding days. Most of us have assumed, notwithstanding the "depression", that we are living in a great age, and that we should enjoy it to its full, striving always for happiness. Doubtless, the Elizabethan had much the same Hedonistic philosophy we have today. He was living in an enlightened period, and he must derive all the happiness he could from his new and wonderful environment.

The Elizabethan had his theatre which he frequented as we do our motion picture theatres. The theatre then, like the movie today, was available to people of every social class, although the distinction was not so great as it had been

regarding rank.

Bear baiting and cock fighting, the latter extending even down to the school boys' interest, were as popular as the boxing and wrestling matches of today.

The masque, with its music, dancing and gorgeous costumes, was similar to our night club floor show, and, like our night club, with a select and small audience. In their case it was limited largely to the court, in ours, to the wealthy élite.

Having drawn this brief analogy, between our times and the people of Jonson's time, perhaps we will feel a greater kinship with the Elizabethans, and we will feel a similarity of spirit with them which will help us to appreciate their morals and manners as we see them through Jonson's eyes. We will find it easier to bridge the gap of four hundred years to his period than we would to go back just one hundred and fifty years to the Romantic Age of Wordsworth.

Since London was the center of English life at this time, it would be appropriate to start a discussion of Elizabethan morals and manners with the amusements existing in London at that time. London now had become too large for its city walls. There were about one hundred and fifty thousand people living in and about the city. The streets were narrow and dirty, and so people had begun to inhabit the outlying districts, although the city proper was still surrounded by about two miles of wall.

To get a fuller view of London in Jonson's time, let us look at Visscher's View of London, 1616. London was built up largely on the north bank of the Thames with low hills making a background. It was a pretty city with innumerable steeples lending their charm to its atmosphere. The outstanding architectural monument was Saint Paul's church, later to be restored by Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren. It loomed large in comparison with the smaller surrounding buildings and, as we shall see later, it was of major importance in London life. The Thames itself was alive with boats, pleasure craft as well as commercial ships. London Bridge, which connected the city proper with South Warke, was about half way between St. Paul's church and the Tower of London. The Tower of London and its surrounding walls could be seen about a mile and a half to the east of St. Paul's church. The Bridge was broad and lined with shops and houses on both sides. South Warke was not a new suburb; it was mentioned by Chaucer some two centuries before.

> "In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay."[1]

The Tabard Inn was still in existence in Jonson's day and was not destroyed until 1676. Although South Warke was a small place, it was important to the Londoner, for it was there, on the Bank side, that the theatres, bear dens, and stews were

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[1] F. N. Robinson, ed., The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1933), p. 19.

located.

The most popular amusement of the day was, beyond any doubt, the theatre. The foremost reason for this lay in the fact that the majority of the Elizabethans were still illiterate, in spite of improved educational facilities; so the theatre provided them with educational resources as well as an enjoyable escape into imaginative realms. The poets realized that the stage offered a lucrative profession as compared with other scholarly pursuits, and, as a result, the educated man with literary talent naturally turned to writing plays. We might be inclined to think that Shakespeare made this the great age for drama, but a perusal of the plays of the dramatists just preceding him and his contemporaries will reveal that Shakespeare did not make the age of drama. Marlowe, Greene, Lyly, Peele (the university wits), and Kyd wrote outstanding drama before Shakespeare appeared on the scene; so we cannot commend Shakespeare for stimulating all the drama of this prolific age. We said above that the theatre was available to every class, but notwithstanding this fact, the audiences were small. Therefore, long runs were unprofitable, so that many plays were written of a necessity. Great new realms had been opened in the dramatic world; classical drama was being revived as models for the dramatist, and the old religious play no longer held sway. The first theatre, taking the place of the guild stage on wheels and the court yard, was built in 1576 by James Burbage and was called the Theatre in

Shoreditch, which was north of London. In the following year the Curtain was erected, not so-called because of a scenic device, but because of the ground on which it stood named The Curtain. In 1587 the Rose was built by Henslowe on the Bankside. In 1594 the Swan, depicted by Visscher some distance to the west, was built on the Bankside, and in 1599 Burbage erected the Globe theatre nearby with the material from the theatre in Shoreditch. In 1613 a new Globe theatre replaced the old Globe, and it is this one which we see in Visscher's engraving. The Fortune was built by Henslowe and Alleyn in 1600. The Blackfriars was built by the Burbages in 1596. All of these theatres were erected outside of the city limits, one or two miles north of London, but the majority of them were located on the Bankside, across the river.

Today theatres are located in the heart of the city, accessible to people from all about. Why should Elizabethan theatres have been erected outside of the city limits? Most of the buildings in London were wooden structures and any lighting was done with torches, an open flame. Thus, we can readily see that the fire hazard was tremendous. This fact alone would have been enough to make the authorities forbid the city theatre. There was another dangerous factor involved, however, - in years of plague the theatre, where many people gathered, was an infectious place. The Elizabethan theatre was a round or octagonal or square shaped building constructed of wood, three stories high. At the top, on one side, the

hut, a small superstructure, projected upwards, and it was from this that the flag, indicating a performance day, was flown. Within, the theatre resembled an inn courtyard, the "theatre" which preceded it. The pit, or ground floor, was open to the air, thus providing more light. It is interesting to note that the pit, in which part of the audience stood, was the least expensive, in contrast to the American theatre where the orchestra seats are the dearest. Three tiers of galleries surrounded the pit for those who could afford a better vantage point. Jonson refers to the gallery as "the twopenny room."[1] The pit was apt to be crowded, the atmosphere stuffy, and one's neighbors, groundlings, might not have been so desirable. There were boxes on the stage, where dandies could flaunt their style, which were also more expensive. The stage itself extended into the pit, simply a slightly raised platform with no curtain, open on three sides. At the rear was a curtain which concealed the inner stage, on which there were a few properties used to suggest an interior scene, such as a bedroom in a house, or a room in a tavern. Above this, on a floor level with the first gallery was an upper stage, used for balcony scenes. At the very top was the hut, mentioned above, a small roon covered with a thatched roof, from which gods, saints, or angels could be lowered to the stage proper by means of a mechanical contrivance. Some supernatural beings,

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[1] Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour, induction, Vol. I, p. 66.

ghosts or devils, were hoisted on to the stage from below through a trap door. To the right and left of the inner stage were retiring rooms from which the actors entered. The outer stage was covered with a thatched roof supported by two columns.

Jonson knew the influence of the theatre on the public and he had an eye for his audiences, scornful of those who lacked standards of judgment.

> ...when you come to plays, be humorous, look with a good starched face, and ruffle your brow like a new boot, laugh at nothing but your own jests or else as the noblemen laugh ...and sit on the stage and flout provided you have a good suit.[1]

Jonson had no use for the man who attended the play because it was the correct thing to do.

> The rude barbarous crew, a people that have no brains, and yet grounded judgments; these will hiss anything that mounts above their grounded capacities.[2]

and

> a few capricious gallants...have taken such a habit of dislike in all things that they will approve nothing, be it ever so conceited or elaborate; but sit dispersed, making faces, and spitting, wagging their upright ears, and cry, filthy! filthy! simply uttering their own condition, and using their wryed countenances instead of a vice to turn the good aspects of all that shall sit near them from what they behold.

Some felt they should feign interest to appear wise to the rest of the audience. Cokes at the puppet show expects "pretty impudent boys now, to bring stools, fill tobacco, fetch ale,

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[1] Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 69, Act I, Scene 1.

[2] Ibid., The Case is Altered, Vol. II, p. 686, Act II, Scene 4.

and beg money, as they have at other houses."[1] Jonson asks:

> that every man here exercise his own judgment and not censure by contagion, or upon trust, from another's voice or face, that sits by him, be he never so first in the commission of wit; as also that he be fixed and settled in his censure that what he approves or not approves today, he will do the same tomorrow.[2]

> and sometimes a fellow, that comes not there past once in five years, at a parliament time or so will be as deep mired in censuring as the best.[3]

So we see that Ben was beset with trials in his audience. The common sort did not want plays which dealt with humours. The serving man complains: "Nothing but kings and princes in it; the fool came not out a jot."[4] The type of person who wanted horse play must have annoyed Jonson, since his comedies were more intellectual. The sea captain says: "I would fain come with my cockatrice one day, and see a play, if I knew when there were a good bawdy one; but they say you have nothing but Humours, Revels, and Satires."[5] Some people judged the play by the costumes; other critics were too prejudiced in favor of old plays: "Old Hieronimo, as it was first acted, was the only best and judiciously penn'd play of Europe."[6] Jonson's most outspoken attack on the audience is in his own words. Many spectators go to the theatre

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1. Op. cit., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 249, Act V, Sc. 3.
2. Ibid., induction Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 181,
3. Ibid., The Case is Altered, Vol. II, p. 685, Act II, Sc. 4.
4. Ibid., The Case is Altered, Vol. II, p. 667, Act.I, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., The Poetaster, Vol. I, p. 262, Act III, Sc. 1.
6. Ibid., Cynthia's Revels, induction, Vol. I, p. 153.

> to see and to be seen: to make a general muster of themselves in their clothes of credit; and possess the stage against the play: to dislike all but mark nothing. And by their confidence of rising between the acts, in oblique lines, make affidavit to the whole house of their not understanding one scene. Armed with this prejudice, as the stage furniture or arras clothes, they were there, as spectators, away: for the faces in the hangings and they, beheld alike.[1]

Although Jonson complained so betterly of his audience, he knew that the stage played a prominent part in Elizabethan education as well as recreation.

> Fitzdottrel. And Richard the Third, you know what end he came to....
>
> Meercraft. By my faith, you are cunning in the chronicle, sir.
>
> Fitz. No, I confess I have it from the play-books,
> And think they are more authentic.[2]

Ben Jonson knew that he could use the stage as a means to disclose prevalent vice to his audience.

> ...my soil
> Was never ground into such oily colours
> To flatter vice, and daub iniquity:
> But with an armed and resolved hand,
> I'll strip the ragged follies of the time
> Naked as at their birth.[3]

The stage was for Jonson a place where he could flaunt his ideas concerning his fellow men. As long as people attended his plays, he could show them their actions. While he held their interest, he could reform them. Pointing out

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1. Op. cit., The New Inn or the Light Heart to the Reader, Vol. II, p. 426.
2. Ibid., The Devil is an Ass, Vol. II, p. 290, Act II, Sc.1.
3. Ibid., Every Man Out His Humour, induction, Vol. I,

vicious customs was far easier for the dramatist through the medium of actors than for the preacher who had his voice alone with which to appeal to the congregation. Jonson clothed his bitter comments in comical dialogue and suspense. Consequently, his audience enjoyed the imitation of individuals who disclosed Elizabethan idiosyncrasies. We must bear in mind that Jonson used the stage as a means of livelihood as well as a place to give vent to his personal opinions. He was forced to maintain the favor of the audience if he was to make his living. So he says he "will strip the ragged follies of the time naked as at their birth."[1]

In close competition bear baiting, and the more brutal spectacles such as bull baiting and cock fighting, vied with the theatre for popularity. Every big town had its fighting bear to amuse the people. The popularity of baiting had become so great as to interfere with play productions. Consequently, Queen Elizabeth designated Thursday as the only day in the week that amusement seekers might attend the aforementioned contests. Occasionally theatres were used for this purpose, but one theatre, the Manor of Paris Gardin, was erected specifically for a bear garden. During Jonson's time there were as many as twenty bears, three bulls, and seventy

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1. Every Man Out of His Humour, induction, Vol. I, p. 61.

dogs kept at the Garden. Blind bears were whipped by men, and rarely horses were baited. The bears were at times so famous as to be known by name to the spectators. The bear or bull was chained to a stake, then five or six dogs, mastiffs, English Bulls, or greyhounds, were let loose to heckle, and perhaps butcher, the chained animal.

> You fought high and fair, sir John,
> At the head
> Like an excellent bear dog.[1]

Dogs frequently died of wounds or were killed outright in the arena. Jonson had little use for baiting, and he sardonically refers to it as "that subtle sport:"

> ...he has been a great man at the Bear-garden in his time; and from that subtle sport has ta'en the witty denomination of his chief carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his bear, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deer and his ape.[2]

The dogs, when not in action, were kept chained up in kennels. "I'll have you chain'd up, with your bull-dogs and bear-dogs, if you be not civil the sooner, I'll send you to kennel."[3] Animals were in the charge of a caretaker known as a bear ward. "I entreated a bear ward, one day, to come down with the dogs of some four parishes that way."[4] For the sake of advertising, the bear ward would frequently parade his bear through streets. A clown would accompany the little procession, completed perhaps by an ape tied to the bear's back.

Bear baiting, whipping of blind bears, goring of dogs by

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1. Ben Jonson's Plays, Epicoene or the Silent Woman, Vol. 1, p. 528, Act IV, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 512, Act II, Sc. 4.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 494, Act I, Sc. 1.

bulls' horns seem very brutal to us today, but we must remember that within a short distance of Paris Garden and the bear dens stood the Globe, where the most refined plays were produced. On Wednesday, the Elizabethans would attend a performance of Romeo and Juliet, on Thursday, a bear baiting would appeal to their more brutal sensibilities. Then, too, we must bear in mind the fact that we countenance football, in which players are frequently injured and sometimes killed, whereas James, in his list of sports, debars "all rough and violent exercises; as football, meeter for laming".[1] (Football in James's day was somewhat different, an unlimited number of competitors, but equal on each side, and kicking in the shins was permitted.) The Elizabethan should not be condemned too heartily for his interest in bear baiting.

Fencing was a very prominent part of Elizabethan life, both for entertainment and for settling disputes. Jonson himself had killed a man, after being challenged to a duel to settle a dispute. The disputes were not necessarily serious; almost any trivial argument would end in a duel. Thus, the rapier or sword was a part of many men's costume and highly valued. Upon being asked to sell his weapon, Shift replied,

> My rapier! no, sir; my rapier is my guard, my defence, my revenue, my honour.... Hard is the choice when the valiant must eat their arms, or clens (starve). Sell my rapier! No, my dear, I will not be divorced from thee yet. I have ever found thee true as steel.[2]

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[1] Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 106.

[2] Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, Act III, Sc. 1.

> Sell my rapier? 'odslid! -- Nay, sir, for mine own part, as I am a man that has served in causes, or so, so I am not apt to injure any gentleman in the degree of falling foul, but -- sell my rapier! I will tell you, sir, I have served with this foolish rapier, where some of us dare not appear in haste; I mean no man; but let that pass. Sell my rapier! death to my lungs! This rapier, sir, has travell'd by my side, sir, the best part of France, and the Low Country: I have seen Flushing, Brill and the Hague, with this rapier, sir, in my Lord of Leicester's time, and by God's will, he that should offer to disrapier me now, I would---[1]

Jonson felt that this was carrying things to extremes. He exaggerates examples of the trivialities from which duels occasionally arose. Downright decides to send his roistering half-brother Wellbred and his companions from Kitely's house:

> Downright. ...Sirrah, you ballad singer, and Slops your fellow there, get you out, get you home; or by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.
>
> Wellbred. 'Slight, stay, let's see what he dare do; cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; a touch any man here and by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.[2]

At this point they all draw and have to be separated. Brainworm, a servant, tries to gull two stupid gentlemen into buying his blade. He describes to them long years of non-existent war service in order to give his sword better credentials. The three then discuss the merits of a good rapier.

> Elder. Ay, with a velvet scabbard, I think.
>
> Stephen. Nay, an't be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, coz, that's flat; I'd not wear it, as it is, an you would give me an angel.

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1. Op. cit., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 102. Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Op. cit., Every Man in His Humour, Vol. I, p. 602, Act IV, Sc. 1.

Brainworm. At your worship's pleasure, sir; nay, 'tis a most pure Toledo (Spanish steel).

Stephen. I had rather it were a Spaniard. But tell me, what shall I give you for it? An it had a silver hilt---[1]

There were fencing schools in Jonson's day; some taught Italian fencing, others the stilted Spanish fencing.

The geometrical or 'Euclidian' principle is carried to extremes (in the Spanish style). The adversaries move round and round in circles, striving never to come uncovered within touch of each other's weapons. There are three different passes to be learned, all based on an attack by movements of the foot geometrically measured, and it is by adroit combination of these passes that you hope for victory. Italian fencing is more natural and really effective, but the Spanish style is fascinating to watch; greatly it resembles a form of grimly vigorous circular dancing.[2]

Jonson describes the two types of fencing for us in a discussion by Colonel Tipto. Fly and the Host of the Light Heart Inn.

Col. Tipto. Your Spanish host is never seen in cuerpo (undressed)
Without his paramentos, cloke and sword.

Fly. Sir,
He has the father of swords within, a large sword;
Black Cornish styled of Sir Rud Hughdebras.

Tip. And why a long sword, bully bird? thy sense?

Fly. To note him a tall man, and a master of fencing.

Tip. But doth he teach the Spanish way of don Lewis?

Fly. No, the Greek master he.

Tip. What call you him?

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1. Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 579, Act II, Sc. 2.
2. William Stearns Davis, Life in Elizabethan Days (Harper and Bros., New York, 1930), p. 305.

Fly. Euclid.

Tip. ---Euclid, he is stale and antic!
Give me the moderns.

Fly. Sir, he minds no moderns,
Go by, Hieronimo!

Tip. What was he?

Fly. The Italian,
That play'd with abbot Antony in the Friars,
And Blinkinsops the bold.

Tip. Ay, marry, those
Had fencing names; what is become of them?

Host. They had their times, and we can say, they were.
So had Caranza his; so had Don Lewis.

Tip. Don Lewis of Madrid is the sole master
Now of the world.

Host. But this of the otherworld,
Euclid demonstrates. He! he is for all:
The only fencer of name, now in Elysium.

Fly. He does it all by lines and angles, colonel;
By parallels and sections has his diagrams.[1]

Although Jonson is making fun of poor Tipto's self-appointed wisdom, we do derive some idea of the two schools of fencing.

Tennis was played in Jonson's day, going under the name of "racquet." It was a very popular game with Henry the VIII, Elizabeth's father, who was an excellent player. It was still popular among the Elizabethan common people as well as the aristocrats. The rapid back and forth movement of the ball

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1. *Ben Jonson's Plays*, *The New Inn*, Vol. II, pp. 449-450, Act II, Sc. 2.

was used as a simile by Jonson when speaking of badinage.

> Call you this jeering! I can play at this,
> 'Tis like a ball at tennis.[1]

Before proceeding further with the city amusements of Jonson's contemporaries, we should look at those which Elizabeth's successor, King James, advocated and those of which he disapproved.

> As for sitting or house pastimes -- since they may at times supply the room which, being empty, would be patent to pernicious idleness -- I will not therefor agree with the curiosity of some learned men of our age in forbidding cards, and such like games of hazard: when it is foull and stormy weather, then, I say, ye may lawfully play at the cards on tables; for, as to dicing, I think it becometh best deboshed souldiers to play at on the heads of their drums, being only ruled by hazard, and subject to knavish cogging: and as for the chess, I think it over foul, because it is over-wise and philosophic folly.[2]

Several indoor games are mentioned in Cynthia's Revels: " Riddles or Purposes" which they complain is stale, "Prophecies" which required few players, and "Substantives and Adjectives" which was played in the following manner. One player thinks of a noun, while each of the others, ignorant of the noun he has chosen, gives an adjective in turn. Then the first player discloses the noun he has chosen and the others have to justify the use of their adjectives with the substantive. The game is played by eight persons: Phantaste

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[1] Op. cit., Staple of News, Vol. II, pp. 397-398, Act IV, Sc.I

[2] Henry Thaw Stephenson, The Elizabethan People (Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1910), p. 107.

who chooses the substantive, Philautia, Moria, Argurion, Anaides, Hedon, Amorphus, and Asotus.

Phan. I have thought; speak your adjectives, sirs.

Phil. But do not you change then.

Phan. Not I. Who says?

Mor. Odoriferous.

Phil. Popular.

Arg. Humble.

Anaides. White-liver'd.

Hed. Barbarous.

Amor. Pythagorical.

Hed. Yours, signior.

Asotus. What must I do, sir?

Amor. Give forth your adjective with the rest; as prosperous, good, fair, sweet, well.

Hed. Any thing that hath not been spoken.

Asotus. Yes, sir, well spoken shall be mine.

Phan. What, have you all done?

All. Ay.

Phan. Then the substantive is Breeches. Why odoriferous breeches, guardian?[1]

The trick was to take a substantive to which it would be difficult for the others to adapt their adjective. In this particular game, Hedon's justification of "barbarous" was one of

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[1] Op. cit., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 190.

the cleverest. "Barbarous! because commonly, when you have worn your breeches sufficiently, you give them to your barber."[1]

Another game called "A thing done, and who did it" is played. One player conceives of something done, the others, not knowing what has been done, describe how it was done by answering questions which the game comprises, beginning with "who did it."

Phantaste.	Why, I imagine, A thing done; Hedon thinks, who did it; Moria, with what it was done; Anaides, where it was done; Argurion, when it was done; Amorphus, for what cause was it done; you, Philautia, what followed upon the doing of it; and this gentle man (Asotus), who could have done it better.[2]

The result in this game was as ludicrous as the other.

Phan.	Then the thing done was, An oration was made. Rehearse. An oration was made---
Hed.	By a traveller---
Mor.	With a glyster---
Anaides.	In a pair of pain'd shops---
Arg.	Last progress---
Amor.	For the delight of ladies---
Phan.	And, this silent gentleman (disapproving Asotus) would have done it better.[3]

There were, too, games played upon tables such as billiards, two forms of which were known as "Shove-groat" and "Shovel-board." Bagatelle was called "Troll My Dame."

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1. Op. cit., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 190.
2. Ibid., p. 191.
3. Ibid., p. 192.

Games of chance, cards and dice, were important at this time, perhaps because the Elizabethan wanted his pastimes to be hazardous and exciting, as was his life. The pack of cards, known as a pair, varied in size according to the game that was to be played. There were many different card games, but the four most popular were Primero, Gleek, Maw, and Noddy. Cards were played in the tavern and at the theatre before the performance, as well as in the home.

Primero was apparently similar to poker. Each player was dealt four cards. The jack of diamonds was wild and could be substituted for any suit or card the player desired. The object was to hold either the highest hand or primero, some of the cards were valued at higher than face value (the highest, the seven spot, counted twenty-one), or to obtain a flush.

Gleek was played by three people with forty-four cards; deuce and three spots were left out. Twelve cards were dealt to each person; the remainder, with the exception of one which automatically went to the dealer, could be bought by any of the players. The player who held the ace, jack, or four of trumps was fortunate, for he was paid the value of these cards by the others. The stakes varied according to the players, but rarely were they as high as half a crown. Jonson mentions Primero and Gleek,

> "Give me your honest trick yet at primero
> Or Gleek...[1]

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[1] Op. cit., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 30, Act II, Sc. 1.

But he evidently felt that these two games were the more genteel among games of chance than games with dice.

> Nor play with costermongers (apple sellers),
> at mum-chance, tray trip.
> God make you rich;---
> But keep
> The gallant'st company, and the best games--
> Gleek and Primero....[1]

Jonson draws a simile between fortune and a deck of cards.

> When she (fortune) is pleas'd to trick or tromp
> mankind,
> Some may be coats (court card or coat of arms),
> as in the cards; but, then,
> Some must be knaves, some varlets, bawds, and
> ostlers.
> As aces, duces, cards of ten, to face it
> Out in the game, which all the world is.[2]

Card tricks were in fashion in Jonson's time.

> Somewhat like tricks o' the cards, to cheat a man
> With charming.[3]

Dicing was very popular with the Elizabethans. "That's, sir, as it chances; We'll throw the dice for it, cheer up."[4] The dice were, as a rule, like the modern ones, although sometimes ivory or silver ones were used. The success of Tray trip, a dicing game mentioned in the passage above by Jonson, depended on the success the player had in throwing a three. Backgammon was played, but the most popular dicing game was Hazard, played upon a board. The dice were frequently false, leaded, cut unevenly,hollow,or even lacking a certain number,displaying

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1. Op. cit., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 82, Act V, Sc. 2.
2. Ibid., The New Inn, p. 435, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Alchemist, p. 27, Act II, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., The New Inn, p. 442, Act I, Sc. 1.

new evidence of the cozening in which the Elizabethans delighted.

> ...a bale of dice
> Or two or three packs of cards to shew the cheat
> And nimbleness of hand...[1]

Chess must have been well known to the Elizabethans, since a contemporary of Jonson's, Thomas Middleton, wrote a play called The Game of Chess, a brilliant political satire based upon the moves in chess. Draughts and checkers were played, too.

The women in Jonson's comedies apparently spent half of their time prinking and the other half conceiving tricks and shrewish remarks with which to annoy the men in his comedies. However, the greatest pastime of Elizabethan women was fancy needlework. Tapestry work was very popular at that time. Women were not debarred from other amusements; we find references to women chess players and card players.

The tavern was a popular gathering place for the gamesters as well as the wits. An alehouse was distinguished on the outside by its red, rarely green, lattice work and a sign with a picture representing the name of the tavern. The names of the taverns were interesting, if not always enlightening. The one best known to us is the Mermaid, since it was celebrated by John Keats in his "Lines on the Mermaid Tavern." A reproduction of several of those lines would not be amiss here.

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[1] Op. cit., The New Inn, Vol. I, p. 434.

Souls of poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are pints of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of Venison?[1]

Keats goes on to mention the host's sign-board which we said was the mark of the tavern. Robert Herrick, a contemporary of Jonson's, speak of the Sun, the Dog, and the Triple Tun in "An Ode for Ben Jonson."[2] Ben himself mentions a tavern known as "Heaven and Hell,"[3] another the "Light Heart."[4] The host describes his sign, which represents the name.

"A heart weigh'd with a feather, and outweigh'd too..."[5]

"A heart with a light stuck in it, a Light Heart..."[6]

"Or prior Bolton with his bolt and ton."[7]

"The Cranes, or the Bear at the Bridge-foot"[8] were two other taverns of Jonson's time. "The Windmill"[9] and "The Star"[10] are mentioned in Every Man in His Humour. The tavern was managed by a host, sometimes a hostess, who was assisted by drawers, or vintners, boys who drew the wine or ale from the kegs and served the guests, and a barmaid, celebrated by Jonson in

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1. Shafer, Beowulf to Hardy, Vol. II, p. 297.
2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 335.
3. Ben Jonson's Plays, Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 82, Act V, Sc. 2.
4. Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 430, Act I, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., Every Man in His Humour, Vol. I, p. 600, Act IV, Sc. 1 (Anglicized version).
9. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 604, Act IV, Sc. 3.
10. Ibid.

"To Celia."[1] Naturally the host of the tavern desired a jolly atmosphere in his ale house. He wanted people to drink and feast. Those who were too erudite were not to his liking.

> I must have jovial guests to drive my ploughs,
> And whistling boys to bring my harvest home,
> Or I shall hear no flails thwack. Here, you master
> And you have been this fortnight, drawing flies
> Out of my mats, and pounding them in cages
> Cut out of cards....
> ...speculations
> That do become the age, I do confess!...
> But never had the fate to see a fly
> Alive in your cups, or once heard, Drink, mine host!
> Or such a cheerful chirping charm come from you.[2]
>
> Be joiced first, and drink, and dance, and drink.
> Your lodging here, and with your daily dumps,
> Is mere libel 'gain my house and me.[3]

The host preferred to see his customers making merry over the games of chance described above, and for the most part people went to taverns to make merry.

> ...as in a tavern or a stew,
> He and his wild associates spend their hours,
> In repetition of lascivious jests,
> Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night.[4]

The host took pride in the food and drink which he served to his guests. One host was insulted because his guests would not partake of his specialties, but ate instead:

> A poor quotidian rack of mutton, roasted
> Dry to be grated! and that driven down
> With beer and butter-milk mingled together.

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1. Shafer, Beowulf to Hardy, Vol. I, p. 324.
2. Ben Jonson's Plays, The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 431, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., Every Man in His Humour (Anglicized version), Vol. I, p. 574, Act II, Sc. 1.

Or clarified whey instead of claret!
It is against my freehold, my inheritance,
My Magna Charta, or laetificat,
To drink such balderdash, or bonny-clabber!
Give me good wine, or catholic or christian,
Wine is the word that gleeks the heart of man:
And mine's the house of wine: Sack, says my bush,
Be merry, and drink sherry; that's my posie.[1]

To get an idea of the type of food and drink served and their prices, let us look at a tavern reckoning in one of Shakespeare's plays:

Item, A capon,..................................	2s. 2d.
Item, Sauce,..................................	4d.
Item, Sack, two gallons......................	5s. 8d.
Item, Anchovies and sack after supper.....	2s. 6d.
Item, Bread...................................	ob. 5 [2]

This particular list belonged to a glutton; nevertheless, we are given an idea as to the sort of edibles and their relative prices in the tavern.

Different taverns were frequented by various classes of people. Lawyers, merchants, seamen, wits, all had their particular tavern. Men of letters went to the tavern to discuss literary affairs, or sometimes to write verses. For some it was the workshop as well as the recreational center. "...Who made these verses?...ask Captain Bobadill: he saw me write them at the - pox on it - the Star yonder."[3] Jonson names three taverns in which intellectuals gathered. "A pox on these pretenders to wit! your Three Cranes, Mitre and

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[1] *Op. cit.*, *The New Inn*, Vol. II, p. 431, Act I, Sc. 1.
[2] Shakespeare, *King Henry IV*, Part I, ed. by Hardin-Craig (Scott,Foresman and Co., Chicago, 1932), p. 539, Act II, Sc. 4.
[3] *Ben Jonson's Plays*, *Every Man in His Humour*, p. 600, Act IV, Sc. 1.

Mermaid men."[1]

From this point the discussion of taverns will resolve itself into the two articles which were sold there, liquors and tobacco.

The Elizabethans have a reputation for being carousers. Christopher Marlowe was "stabbed to death in a tavern brawl."[2] Referring again to Keats's well known "Lines on a Mermaid Tavern," the poets "tippled drink."[3] This reputation is based on erroneous premises, particularly when we compare their bibacity with the drinking done today. The modern Americans drink hard liquor. In Elizabethan England, whiskey was known, but, in general, used for medicinal purposes. Gin came to England via the navy from the Dutch sometime after 1600. Aqua vitae is mentioned by Jonson, but it was too strong to be well liked. One was "fired with aqua vitae."[4] Ale and wine (for the moneyed classes) were the beverages of England in Jonson's time. The latter was so popular that an "ale" was synonymous with a festival or fair. Everyone was expected to attend the "ale" to raise money for some benefit, such as a Church Ale or a Clerk Ale. Ale was a malt brew, very similar to the ale drunk today. Both men and women partook of it at all times of the day. Ursula, the pig woman, demands her

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1. Ben Jonson's Plays, Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 183, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Reynolds, English Literature in Fact and Story (Century Co., New York, 1929), p. 99.
3. Shafer, Beowulf to Hardy, Vol. II, p. 297.
4. Ben Jonson's Plays, The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 443, Act II, Sc. 1.

"morning draught, quickly, a bottle of ale."[1] Bobadill demands, "A cup of thy small beer, sweet hostess,"[2] at six o'clock in the morning.

> Now ale---
> And strong ale bless him
> Ods so, some ale and sugar for my founder."[3]

The tapster is told how to cheat the customers so that ale selling will be more profitable.

> Froth your cans well in the filling, at length, rogue, and jog your bottles o' the buttock, sirrah, then skink out the just glass ever and drink with all companies, though you be sure to be drunk; you'll misreckon the better and be less ashamed on't. But your true trick, rascal, must be, to be ever busy, and mistake away the bottles and cans, in haste, before they be half drunk off, and never hear any body call, (if they should chance to mark you) till you have brought fresh, and be able to forswear them.[4]

Although ale was the staple drink of England in this day, and it was less expensive than wine - a "single penny bottle of ale" could be bought - wine was drunk by some of the wealthier people. Jonson was particularly fond of Canary or sack, a light wine imported from the Canary islands. He speaks of this wine as "the best drink, - two glasses of Canary."[5] Again he says of his favorite wine:

> ...an I had twice so many cares
> As you have, I'll drown them all in a cup of sack.[6]

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1. Op. cit., Bartholomew Fair, p. 198, Act II, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Every Man in His Humour, (Anglicized version) Vol. I, p. 569, Act I, Sc. 4.
3. Ibid., Staple of News, Vol. II, p. 355, Act I, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 199, Act II, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 47, Act III, Sc. 2.
6. Ibid., Every Man in His Humour, p. 598, Act III, Sc. 3.

Claret, a red wine imported from France, was also drunk.

"What wine is it, white or claret?"[1]

Claret, sack, and sherry are all mentioned by Jonson in the first quotation on page 48. There was little drunkenness in Jonson's day; insobriety was one vice with which Jonson did not have to cope. The drunkard merely provided comedy. "Good fait now, Ursula's ale and acqua-vitae ish to blame for't; shit down, shweetheart, shit down and sleep a little."[2] It is noteworthy that not ale alone caused this man's inebriety.

There are two or three figures of speech which Jonson uses in connection with drinking that are interesting to remark. He speaks of being as drunk as a Dutchman, "'tis upsee Dutch."[3] If a man "swallowed a tavern token,"[4] he was intoxicated.

A discussion of the smoking habits of the Elizabethans is justified, particularly because it became well known to the English people in 1586, the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Elizabeth. Francis Drake and Ralph Lane (first governor of Virginia) brought the custom back with them from America. Tobacco was sold in apothecary shops, and, as stated above, was sold in taverns. It was smoked or drunk, as the Elizabethans spoke of it in a pipe.

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1. Op. cit., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 460, Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 251, Act V, Sc. 3.
3. Ibid., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 69, Act III, Sc. 4.
4. Ibid., Every Man in His Humour, Vol. I, p. 569.

Yes, an thou canst take tobacco....
Fill a pipe full.[1]

Since tobacco was not a common plant in England, it was frequently mixed with some other leaf. "Three-piece a pipe-full, I will have made of all my whole half-pound of tobacco, and a quarter of pound of colt's-foot mixt with it too, to (eke) it out."[2]

This is my friend Abel, an honest fellow,
He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not
Sophisticate it with sack lees or oil,
Nor washes it in muscadel, and grains,
Nor buries it in gravel, underground,
Wrapp'd up in greasy leather, or piss'd clouts;
But keeps it in fine lily pots, that, open'd
Smell like conserve of roses, or French beans.
He has his maple block, his silver tongs,
Winchester pipes, and fire of Juniper.[3]

Abel used the maple block to cut the tobacco leaf upon, held the coal in the silver tongs, and offered a light from the well burning Juniper fire. And Abel, like other druggists, even provided pipes. Many men and some women smoked in Jonson's day. Urusla says sharply, "Where's my pipe now? Not fill'd! thou arrant incubee."[4] In general, however, tobacco was used to a greater extent by the aristocracy.

So baudy like a courtier and a lord,
God bless him, one that tak'th tobacco.[5]

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1. Op. cit., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 89, Act V, Sc. 3.
2. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 198, Act II, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 14, Act I, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 198, Act II, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 458, Act II, Sc. 2.

Scornfully Jonson sets forth the gentlemanlike use of tobacco:

> ...that to be as exactly qualified as the best of our ordinary gallants are, is affected to entertain the most gentlemanlike use of tobacco; as first to give it the most exquisite perfume; then to know all the delicate sweet forms for the assumption of it; as also the rare corollary and practice of the Cuban ebolition, Euripus and whiff, which he shall receive or take in here at London and evaporate at Uxbridge, or farther, if it please him. If there be any such generous spirit, that is truly enamoured of these good faculties; may it please him, but by a note of his hand to specify the place or ordinary where he uses to eat and lie; and most sweet attendance, with tobacco and pipes of the best sort shall be ministered.[1]

> King James in his Counterblast calls it a 'custom loathsome to the eye, hatefull to the nose, harmfull to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fumes thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomless.'[2]

Those unaccustomed to tobacco wrinkled their features in a grotesque manner. Jonson alludes to one "with a tobacco face, ...his wry'd looks."[3] The custom of smoking in the theatre was practised by some spectators, and there were evidently various kinds of tobacco. "...Having paid my money at the door, with much ado, and here I take my place and sit down: I have my three sorts of tobacco in my pocket, my light by me."[4] As well as being gentlemanlike in its use, tobacco was thought by some of Jonson's contemporaries to be useful medicinally for colds: "...nothing but your rheum; I have been taking an ounce of tobacco."[5] "I could say what I know of the virtue of

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1. Op. cit., Every Man Out of His Humour, p. 98, Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 77.
3. Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, induction, p. 64.
4. Ibid., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, induction, p. 152.
5. Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 458, Act II, Sc. 2.

it (tobacco), for the expulsion of rheums, raw humours, crudities, obstructions, with a thousand of this kind."[1]

Before leaving London life for the rural districts, we should mention briefly the business customs of Elizabethans (not to be treated in this work), since Jonson speaks of them. Most of the business was transacted before eleven o'clock in the morning, because dinner was served at that time. The great business and commercial intercourse center was located in Saint Paul's. Here, men gathered to discuss business projects and trades; here the booksellers dispensed their wares. "I have promised to meet a gentleman this morning in St. Paul's."[2] In fact, the church was such an important meeting place that the bawds or street-walkers frequented it in numbers to make contacts. A man meets a friend in the middle aisle of Saint Paul's, "...you are well met; when shall we sup together, and laugh, and be fat with those good wenches, ha?"[3] Saint Paul's is one of "the four cardinal quarters"[4] where the best news is made. Ambler was sent

> ...emissary Paul's
> A fine-paced gentleman, as you shall see walk
> The middle aisle....[5]

Rural England was growing during the Elizabethan period. Now that England has established her position as sovereign of the seas (Spanish Armada defeated 1588), the people no longer

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1. *Op. cit.*, *Every Man In His Humour*, Vol. I, p. 594, Act III, Sc. 2.
2. *Ibid.*, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Vol.I,p. 93,Act II,Sc.2.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 96, Act III, Sc. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, *Staple of News*, Vol. II, p. 352.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 353

felt the necessity of living in walled towns. Although London dwellers eyed their country cousins with a certain amount of scorn, believed them in general to be gulls, the countryside during Elizabeth's reign, exemplified what we consider "Merrie England." The people were very fond of hunting, indulging in this sport frequently and in various ways. They adhered to their old customs regarding holidays, celebrating them with festivities built around quaint folklore and morris dances. Not the least of country attractions was the market day, and, on a larger scale, the Fair, which Jonson used as a background for one entire play (Bartholomew Fair).

The stag hunt was the favorite hunt with the Elizabethans. The day was made a festive occasion, neither beginning nor ending with the hunt itself. The stag, who fed at night, was located the preceding night by a forester. The hunters then met for a picnic before setting out with their hounds. "The technical term for the pack of hounds was the cry, the kind and number of the hounds being chosen so that they 'cried' a chord of music."[1] The cry of the hounds would bring the frightened stag from his cover; then the hunters would ride to the finish, the dogs would make the capture, and one of the foremost hunters would kill the stag with his bow or with a dagger. It was considered a great honor to be the first to cut the deer and was accomplished in a very

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[1] Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 123.

ceremonious fashion. Hare or cony was hunted in this same manner, but the fox, distinguished today, was not considered worthy of the chase in Jonson's day.

Concerning hawking, King James said in his list of sports:

> As for hawks, I condemn it not; but I must praise it more sparingly, because it neither resembleth the wars so near as hunting doth in making a man hardy and skillfully ridden in all grounds, and is more uncertain and subject to mischances; and, which is worst of all, is there through an extreme stirrer of passions.[1]

Hawking was considered the proper sport of a country gentleman:

> ...an he have e'er a book of the science of hawking and hunting, I would fain borrow it.... Why, you know an a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him: they are more studied than the Greek, or the Latin. He is no gallant's company without them.[2]

Jonson is ridiculing the fact that hunting prowess rather than intellectual culture makes the gallant, showing us the stress which was placed on this sport.

The female hawks were considered the best for hawking. They were captured young and trained to obedience through periods of starvation or sleeplessness. Before the hawk was flying properly, she was brought back by means of a long string.

The hawk when not following the game was kept covered by a hood that completely blinded her. This headdress was

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 107.

[2] *Ben Jonson's Plays*, *Every Man in His Humour*, Vol. I, p. 561, Act I, Sc. 1.

made of silk or of leather, often exceedingly dainty and ornamental. It bore on its top a little tuft of feathers that served as a handle by which it could be easily and quickly removed.[1]

"I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells, and all."[2]

A small silver bell was attached to each leg of the hawk in order to track her down if she got lost, hence the bells mentioned above. The hawk was taken out into the field and unhooded when the game was sighted. The game consisted in ducks, geese, herons, pheasants, quail, partridges, and woodcocks.

"...We are undone for want of fowl in the Fair here.... I have neither plover nor quail for them: persuade this between you two, to become a bird o' the game.[3]

Upon release, the hawk was expected to soar far above her prey and then swoop down upon it. Then she would either retrieve the game, or, if the prey had sought cover, she would mark the spot where it disappeared, waiting for the huntsman to send them out to her.

> 'Tis my wonder
> Two animals should hawk at all discourse thus,
> Fly every subject to the mark, or retrieve--[4]

The hunter pursued his hawk's flight on horseback where it was possible, and on foot where the going was too rough.

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1. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 116.
2. Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man in His Humour, Vol. I, p. 561, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 239, Act III, Sc. 3.
4. Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 451, Act II, Sc. 2.

Needless to say, the sport of hawking, the hawk and all of her trappings, was an expensive one. There was a less expensive yet delightful sport indulged in by the poorer people. Archery for war purposes was no longer used as it had been in medieval days, and it was now relegated to the realm of sports. We know, however, that archery was for the most part considered beneath the dignity of a gentleman. "...Because I dwell at Hogsden, I shall keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury."[1] Archery contests were held in much the same way that they are today. A target was placed a certain distance away from the contestants who shot at it with their bows and arrows.

The celebration of holidays played a very important part of Elizabethan life. Holidays, which mean little or nothing to us today, held a great significance for them. Although England was at this time a Protestant country, she had not relinquished her Catholic celebrations, and some of her holidays, such as May day, dated back to pagan festivities. For that reason, a treatment of a few of these celebrations is necessary in connection with the morals and manners of the Elizabethans.

On Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent began, it was customary to have cock fights. The school boys were allowed on this day to display their fighting cocks before the master.

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[1] Op. cit., Every Man in His Humour, Vol. I, p. 561, Act I, Sc. 1.

It was evidently a day of merriment for all young boys, apprentices as well as schoolboys, before the Lenten season began. "...He would have hang'd a pewterer's prentice once upon a Shrove-Tuesday's riot, for being of that trade, when the rest were quiet."[1] Complaining of her husband's merry-making, Mrs. Otter says, "Never a time that courtiers or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a Shrove-Tuesday."[2] "...With the rising of the prentices, and pulling down the bawdy houses there upon Shrove Tuesday."[3] The apprentices considered Shrove Tuesday their particular holiday and took it upon themselves to attack the street walkers and to riot among the bawdy houses. Occasionally they attacked the theatres as well.

Whitsunday was the fiftieth day after Easter. It was a festival day, and the Monday immediately following it was the most popular day for ales, as mentioned above. Tuesday was the last day of the fasting. It was a much quieter celebration than the days which made up Shrove-tide.

"I would have you get your Whitsuntide velvet cap, and your staff in hand to entertain them."[4]

May day with its games included the most elaborate traditions. People were expected to make merry and sing.

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1. Op. cit., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 494, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 512, Act III, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 245, Act V, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 512, Act III, Sc. 1.

If May day come, and the sun shine, perhaps,
They'll sing like Memnon's statue, and be vocal.[1]

May day in England was probably the survival of the Roman festival in honor of Flora, goddess of flowers. On that day the people went into the hills for flowers and leaves to decorate the May pole, which they have also brought back. Then they danced about the May pole. The dancing dated back to the Middle Ages and was called morris dancing. At about the middle of the fifteenth century, however, characters from Robin Hood had been added to encourage archery, which was dying out. At its highest development under Elizabeth and James, the dramatis personae of the morris dance included the following characters: Robin Hood, Maid Marion, Friar Tuck, Little John, the Fool, Tom the Piper, the Hobby Horse, the Dragon, and from two to ten morris dancers, or the same number of Robin Hood's men, with the painted May pole in the center.[2] It may have been this festival which influenced Jonson to write his play The Sad Shepherd.

The morris dancers wore bells attached to their wrists and ankles to be rung while they were dancing. A pipe usually furnished the music for the dance. The hobby-horse was considered one of the most important characters. A discussion among Fastidious Brisk, Carlo Buffone, and Sogliardo shows some of the characteristics of the morris dance.

Carlo Buffone. S'blood! you shall see him turn morrice-dancer, he has got him bells, a good suit, and a hobby-horse.

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1. Op. cit., Staple of News, Vol. II, p. 391, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 156.

Sogliardo. Signior, now you talk of a hobby-horse, I know where one is will not be given for a brace of angels (20 shillings).

Fastidious Brisk. How is that, sir?

Sog. Marry, sir, I am telling this gentleman of a hobby-horse; it was my father's indeed, and, though I say it--

Car. That should not say it - on, on.

Sog. He did dance in it, with as good humour and as good regard as any mare of his degree whatsoever, being no gentleman: I have danc'd in it myself too.

....

Sog. Nay, look you, sir, there's ne'er a gentleman in the country has the like humours; for the hobby-horse, as I have; I have the method for the threading of the needle and all, the--

Car. How the method?

Sog. Ay, the leigerity for that, and the whighhie (neighing) and the daggers in the nose, and the travels of the egg from finger to finger (sleight of hand) and all the humours incident to the quality. The horse hangs at home in my parlour. I'll keep it for a monument as long as I live, sure.[1]

The morris dancers were not only popular on May day, but they were kept busy on fair days as well. The fair undoubtedly grew out of the market day, and it was, in fact, nothing more than a glorified market day. One day each week was set aside for a market day in every town and village. On that day the farmers took their produce into town to sell it,

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[1] Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 77, Act II, Sc. 1.

in turn buying things they needed:

> ...upon the market day,
> And be protested for my butter and eggs,
> To the last bodge of oats, and bottle of hay.[1]

Livelier than the busy market day was the fair, which, with its wealth of entertainment and fascinating wares, visited the community once or twice a year.

The biggest fair in all England is probably Stonebridge Fair held in a large field near Cambridge. Its best rival is the renowned Bartholomew Fair near London, which is however better known for its spectacular sideshows and thimble-rigging (sleight-of-hand) than for the vastness of its commerce.[2]

Bartholomew Fair took place on "the four and twentieth of August! Bartholomew-day!"[3] Dishonesty was frequently met with at the fair; rotten foods were sold as pure ones. "Many are the yearly enormities of this Fair...a foolish constable or a sleepy watchman, is all our information."[4] Pickpockets found the fair productive: "...you must use your hawk's eye nimbly, and fly the purse to a mark still, where 'tis worn, and on which side; that you may give me the sign with your back, or hang your head that way in time."[5] The fair offered a chance for people to get drink.

> Yearly with old saint Bartle!
> The drunkards they are wading.[6]

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1. Op. cit., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 437, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Davis, Life in Elizabethan Days, p. 287.
3. Ben Jonson's Plays, Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 183, Act I, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., p. 196, Act II, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., p. 202, Act II, Sc. 1.
6. Ibid., p. 197, Act II, Sc. 1.

There were numerous booths and stalls and the salesmen peddled their wares from these, as did the toyseller.

What do you lack? What is't you buy? What do you lack? rattles, drums, halberts, horses, babies o' the best, fiddles of the finest.[1]

What do you lack gentlemen, what is it you lack? a fine horse? a lion? a bull? a bear? a dog? or a cat? an excellent fine Bartholomew bird? or an instrument? what is't you lack.[2]

There was a woman who sold a gingerbread, another who sold roast pig and ale, a corn cutter - "Have you any corns in your feet and toes"[3]; a mouse trap man - "Buy a mousetrap, a mousetrap, or a tormenter for fleas"[4]; a man who sold ballads, and a costard monger with pears. There were all kinds of monstrosities to be seen.

I have been at the Eagle and the Black Wolf and the Bull with the five legs and two pizzles: - he was a calf at Uxbridge fair two years agore - and at the dogs that dance the morrice, and the hare of the Tabor.[5]

Not the least of the spectacles at the Fair was the puppet show, which often took a classical story for its action.

"Behold our chief actor, amorous Leander."

Nevertheless, the puppet show was for the common people.

Littlewit. I have an affair in the Fair, Win, a puppet-play of mine own making, say nothing that I writ for the motion-man, which you must see Win.

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1. Op. cit., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 197, Act II, Sc.1.
2. Ibid., p. 203, Act II, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 201, Act II, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., p. 201, Act II, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., p. 201, Act II, Sc. 1.

Mrs. Littlewit. I would I might John; but my mother will never consent to such a profane motion, she will call it.[1]

Having discussed the morris dances and having mentioned briefly the ballad seller, we find the question arising in our minds as to what the exact status of music was in Jonson's day. Ben Jonson himself is vague in his allusions to music and musical instruments; he never composed the music for his renowned masques. However, a discussion of Elizabethan customs would be lacking indeed, if it made no mention of tastes in music. The Elizabethans were very fond of ballads, which, in words, if not in rhythm, were similar to the popular "hits" of today; they were catchy songs.

...He has learn'd nothing, but to sing catches, and repeat 'Rattle bladder, rattle'! and 'O Madge'. I dare not let him walk alone, for fear of learning of vile tunes which he will sing at supper, and in the sermontimes! If he meet, but a carman in the street, and I find him not talk to keep him off on him, he will whistle him and all his tunes over at night in his sleep![2]

Here is a typical song:

O, that joy so soon should waste!
Or so sweet a bliss
As a kiss
Might not forever last!
So sugar'd, so melting, so soft, so delicious,
The dew that lies on roses,
When the moon herself discloses,
Is not so precious
O rather than I would it smother,
Were I to taste such another;

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1. Op. cit., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 193, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 189, Act I, Sc. 1.

It should be my wishing
That I might die with kissing.[1]

Music at mealtime, especially on festive occasions, was enjoyed by the Elizabethans.

Jordan. The dinner is gone up.
Jug. I hear the whistle.
Jordan. Ay, and the fidlers.[2]

Clerimont. The smell of the venison, going through the street, will invite one noise of fiddlers or other.

Dauphine. I would it would call the trumpeters hither.

Cler. Faith, there is hope: they have intelligence of all feasts. There's good correspondence betwixt them and the London cooks.[3]

The musical instruments used by the Elizabethans were the lute, the bandore, the bass viol, the cittern, and the flute. With the exception of the flute, these were all stringed instruments on the order of the guitar.

The lute was kept by barbers for the entertainment of their customers while waiting. Frequently the customers, because of impatience would break one of the strings and the barber would have to repair the instrument, "draw his own teeth, and add them to the lute string."[4] The barber kept a cittern too, for the amusement of his clients. "That cursed barber...I have married his cittern."[5] Jonson mentions the

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1. Op. cit., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 193, Act IV, Sc.1.
2. Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 461-2, Act III, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 517, Act III, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., p. 520, Act III, Sc. 2.
5. Ibid.

bass viol. "Come we must have you turn fiddler again, slave, get a base viol at your back."[1] The virginal was the smaller counterpart of the modern piano.

Although Jonson has little to say concerning music, we must not overlook his masques, since he was the skilled master of this spectacle. The masque reached its zenith in the time of King James. In the beginning it consisted simply in a disguised dance by people gathered for a festive occasion. Later the masque included some dialogue. The masque, unlike the stage, had gorgeous settings. This spectacle was presented in honor of some visiting celebrity or to complete a local ceremony such as a wedding. "I would fain have a fine young masque at my marriage."[2] Lady Haughty, trying to distract Morose, inquires about his preparations for the wedding. "Pardon me, sir, I must insinuate your errors to you; no gloves? no garters? no scarves? no epithalamium? no masque?"[3] The masque required a great deal of preliminary work, and Jonson is being very ironical when he has Cokes inquire of the puppet show man, "can he set out a masque, trow?"[4] Occasionally a holiday was enough to merit a masque production. "As before, one Christmas, he got into a masque at court, by his wit and the good means of his cittern."[5] Since the masque was an

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1. Op. cit., Poetaster, Vol. I, p. 261, Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 216, Act III, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 523, Act III, Sc. 2.
4. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 217, Act III.
5. Ibid., Staple of News, Vol. II, p. 361, Act I, Sc. 2.

expensive production, it was performed for and by the aristocracy, requiring the talents of a poet, musician, stage carpenter, professional actors, and a man who could coach the amateur nobility (both men and women) in their parts, which were, as a rule, confined to the dance rather than the dialogue. To consummate the wedding of Audrey Turfe and Pol Martin Jonson shows us a masque in five motions, using local action, other than classical story for background. The masque was intended to be, primarily, a magnificent display of music, scenery, and dancing to delight the nobility.

In many ways the Elizabethans had made tremendous strides culturally ahead of their medieval ancestors, but, in general, they clung to the superstitious beliefs of the Middle Ages. Fairies, witches, and ghosts were very real to them. The powers of a witch were many and annoying. Small wonder the Elizabethans were careful not to cross a witch's path.

> ...the laming of a poor cow or two,
> Entering a sow, to make her cast her farrow,
> Or crossing of a market-woman's mare
> Twixt this and Tottenham?...
> You have some plot now
> Upon a tunning of ale, to stale the yeast,
> Or keep the churn so, that the butter come not,
> Spite of the house wife's cord or her hot spit:
> Or some good ribibe, about Kentish town
> Or Hogsden, you would hang now for a witch,
> Because she will not let you play round Robin
> And you'll go sour the citizen's cream 'gainst Sunday,
> That she may be accused for't and condemn'd,
> By a Middlesex jury, to the satisfaction,
> Of their offended friends, the Londoners' wives,
> Whose teeth were set on edge with 't.[1]

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[1] Op. cit., The Devil is an Ass, Vol. II, p. 265, Act I, Sc. 1.

One has only to read some of Shakespeare's plays to see all three of these phenomena through the eyes of Jonson's contemporaries. Jonson himself was a disbeliever, and he was very probably considered a fool by many of his fellow men. People believed in omens; red moon, an eclipse, meteors, untimely storms, were all indications of bad luck to follow.

> And the new star! these things concurring, strange,
> And full of omen! Saw you those meteors?[1]

Jonson ridicules Sordido reading the Almanack.

> O rare! good, good, good, good, good! I thank my stars, I thank my stars for it.... Ha, ha, ha, I will not sow my grounds this year. Let me see, what harvest shall we have? June, July?... The 20, 21, 22 days, rain and wind. O good, good! the 23, and 24 rain and some wind.[2]

Sordido feels himself very lucky that he has a rainy summer to come so that he will not sow his crops just to lose them. A druggist wishes to ascertain which days will be profitable to his business.

> But to look over, sir, my almanack,
> And cross out my ill days, that I may neither
> Bargain, nor trust upon them.[3]

Jonson felt that the general belief in alchemy and astrology was vicious enough to warrant an entire play for its ridicule. People were readier to call in an astrologer than a physician. "On another occasion Elizabeth sought the services of Dr. Dee, a noted astrologer rather than consult a physician

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1. Op. cit., Volpone, Vol. I, p. 421, Act II, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 72, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 16, Act I, Sc. 1.

to counteract the effect of a toothache."[1] The astrologer was for the Elizabethans, prophet, physician, business expert, and adviser. Hand in hand with the astrologer went the alchemist who could conjure up devils.

> Ay, they do now name Bretnor as before
> They talk'd of Gresham, and of doctor Foreman,
> Franklin, and Fiske, and Savory, he was in too;
> But there's not one of these that ever could
> Yet shew a man the devil in true sort.
> They have their crystals, I do know, and rings,
> And virgin-parchment and their dead men's sculls,
> Their ravens'-wings, their lights, and pentacles,
> With characters.[2]

The alchemist was believed to have the ability to change lesser metals into more precious ones.

The usual practice was to smelt quicksilver before the dupe's eyes. When the process was well advanced, the alchemist laid on the crucible a bit of coal with silver filings in holes plugged up with wax. Sometimes by sleight of hand a lump of gold or silver was substituted for one of copper.[3]

Jonson describes some of the utensils used by the alchemist:

> ...your beech-coal, and your corsive waters,
> Your crosslets (money) crucibels, and cucurbites.[4]

People believed that the man who possessed the valuable philosophers' stone could accomplish anything in the way of alchemy.

> This is the day I am to perfect for him
> The magisterium, our great work, the stone;
> And yield it, made, into his hands: of which
> He has, this month, talk'd as he were possess'd.

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1. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 267.
2. Ben Jonson's Plays, The Devil is an Ass, Vol. II, p. 268, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, p. 91.
4. Ben Jonson's Plays, Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 16, Act I, Sc. 1.

And now he's dealing pieces on't away--
Methinks I see him entering ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox and plaguy houses,
Reaching his dose, walking Moorfields for lepers,
And offering citizens' wives pomander-bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir;
Searching the spittal, to make old bawds young;
And in the highways, for beggars, to make rich
I see no end of his labours.--he'll turn the age to gold.[1]

Although the Elizabethans adhered to their superstitions, they were in a sort of comatose state concerning religion. They had said, "Down with Popery," which had played a very important part in medieval life, and the Puritans had not yet become strong enough to make their exacting religious views felt. In his few references to religion Jonson is laughing rather than reforming.

The Catholics were trying to regain their power; hence the Gunpowder Plot (1605) to blow up King James,[2] which brought the puppet shows money because the people were so interested. "...But the Gunpowder plot, there was a get-penny! I have presented that to an eighteen or twenty pence audience, nine times in an afternoon."[3]

The Puritans were long-faced individuals, sober in their mien.

Philautia. Let her go, I pray you, good lady Sobriety, I
am glad we are rid of her.

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1. Op. cit., Alchemist, Vol. II, p. 17, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Reynolds, English Literature in Fact and Story, p. 94.
3. Ben Jonson's Plays, Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 245, Act V, Sc. 1.

Phantaste. What a set face the gentlewoman has, as she were
still going to a sacrifice!

Philautia. O, she is the extraction of a dozen Puritans,
for a look.[1]

A Puritan was "one that rejoiceth in his affliction, and sitteth here to prophecy the destruction of fairs and May-games, wakes and Whitsonales, and doth sigh and groan for the reformation of these abuses."[2] The Puritans felt that the Catholics in their elaborate churches and shrines worshipped idols rather than God.

> ...Now pig, it is a meat, and a meat that is nourishing and may be longed for, and so consequently eaten; it may be eaten; very exceeding well eaten; but in the Fair, and as a Bartholomew pig, it cannot be eaten; for the very calling it a Bartholomew pig, and to eat it so, is a spice of idolatry.[3]

Jonson saw hypocrisy in these zealous characters, "...by the public eating of swine's flesh, to profess our hate and loathing of Judaism, where of the brethren stand tax'd, I will therefore eat, yea, I will eat exceedingly."[4]

Although bitter strife concerning religion was to come later, we find that it was not taken too seriously during Jonson's time.

Puntarvolo. Is he religious?

Gentlewoman. Religious! I know not what you call religious,
but he goes to church, I am sure.[5]

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1. *Op. cit.*, *Cynthia's Revels*, Vol. I, p. 198, Act II, Sc. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, *Bartholomew Fair*, Vol. II, p. 243, Act IV, Sc. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 194, Act I, Sc. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 195, Act I, Sc. 1.
5. *Ibid.*, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Vol. I, p. 80, Act II, Sc. 1.

Before leaving the morals and manners of Jonson's day, we should get some idea of his views concerning types of people, women, dandies, scholars, and, since he is mentioned frequently, the barber.

In Elizabethan days, there were two classes of women, either wives or wives-to-be, and women of ill repute. The women of his day could participate in most of the pleasures in which men indulged. They played the same games, drank with them, and some even smoked, but they did not act on the stage, although they frequently went to the theater. The only way a woman could earn her livelihood was through prostitution, and, since this was condoned by the Elizabethans, we find bawds abounding. It was mentioned above that the bawds went to Saint Paul's to make contacts; but, in general, the stews themselves were located in the suburbs, such as the theatre district on the Bankside. Bawds were attacked on Shrove Tuesday by the apprentices. When a strumpet was sent to prison, she was carted to the accompanying noise of onlookers. "Let there be no bawd carted that year to employ a (barber's) bason of lies."[1]

There were women who had to maintain their dignity.

> A lady of your rank and quality,
> To come to a public inn, so many men,
> Young lords and others, in your company,
> And not a woman but myself, a chamber-maid.[2]

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[1] Op. cit., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 520, Act III, Sc. 2.
[2] Ibid., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 443, Act II, Sc. 1.

The wives described by Jonson were shrewish women. Mrs. Otter nags at her husband:

> Is this according to the instrument, when I married you? that I would be princess, and reign in mine own house; and you would be my subject and obey me? What did you bring me, should make you thus peremptory? do I allow you your half crown a day, to spend where you will among your gamesters, to vex and torment me at such times as these? Who gives you your maintenance, I pray you? Who allows you your horse-meat and man's meat? your three suits of apparel a year? your four pair of stockings, one silk, three worsted? your clean linen, your bands and cuffs when I can get you to wear them?[1]

In return Otter speak of his wife:

> There's no such thing in nature. I confess, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundress, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turns, and goes under that title (wife); but he's an ass that will be so uxorious to tie his affections to one circle.... Wives are nasty, sluttish animals.[2]

To make a wife behave, a man should not dote on her too much.

> You are too amorous, too obsequious,
> And make her too assured she may command you.
> When women doubt most of their husbands' loves,
> They are most loving. Husbands must take heed
> They give no gluts of kindness to their wives.[3]

City wives were not credited with having much intelligence. "City wives, but observe 'em, you have not more perfect true fools in the world bred than they are generally."[4]

In courting a woman,

> If you appear learned to an ignorant wench, or jocund to a sad, or witty to a foolish, why she presently begins to mistrust herself. You must approach them in their own height, their own line; for the contrary makes many, that fear to commit them-

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1. Op. cit., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 513, Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 528, Act IV, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 88, Act II, Sc. 2.
4. Ibid., p. 82, Act II, Sc. 1.

selves to noble and worthy fellows, run into the embraces of a rascal. If she love wit, give verses, though you borrow them of a friend, or buy them, to have good. If valour, talk of your sword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be staunch in fighting. If activity, be seen on your barbary often, or leaping over stools, for the credit of your back. If she love good clothes or dressing, have your learned council about you every morning, your French tailor, barber, linener, etc. Let your powder, your glass and your comb be your dearest acquaintances. Take more care for the ornament of your head, than the safety; and wish the commonwealth rather troubled, than a hair about you.... Let your gifts be slight and dainty, rather than precious. Let cunning be above cost. Give cherries at time of year, or apricots; and say, they were sent you out of the country, though you bought them in Cheapside.[1]

It was customary in Jonson's day for the gentleman to pay court to his lady with gifts. Ladies were particularly fond of pets, dogs, parrots, and monkeys. "Yes, in verity, and gave me this purse, and he has promised me a most fine dog."[2] Men also composed songs to woo their loves.

Clerimont. Have you got the song yet perfect, I gave you, boy?

Page. It will get you the dangerous name of poet in town, sir, besides me a perfect deal of ill-will at the mansion you wot of, whose lady is the argument of it.[3]

With extravagant irony, Jonson describes the manner in which to accost a lady.

(Suppose he were now to come from riding or hunting, or so) he has his trumpet to sound, and then the waiting-gentlewoman she looks out, and then he speaks and then she speaks.... I will step forward three paces; of the which I barely retire one; and after some little flexure of the knee, with an erected grace

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1. Op. cit., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 526, Act III, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 195, Act IV, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 491, Act I, Sc. 1.

salute her; one, two, and three! Sweet lady, God save you![1]

After this courtship, which boiled down only to pleasing the lady, it was necessary to have a marriage license.

Here's Master Bartholomew Cokes, of Harrow o' the Hill, in the county of Middlesex, esquire takes forth his license to marry mistress Grace Wellborn, of the said place and county.[2]

Jonson gives us another reference to the necessary marriage license.

It is money that I want, why should not I marry the money when 'tis offer'd me? I have a license and all, it is but razing out one name, and putting in another.[3]

The marriage ceremony has been completed possibly with a masque and fireworks. "'Slid, what rare fireworks be here? flash, flash."[4] The wife asserts her personality; then comes the divorce. Jonson presents twelve grounds for divorce, which, although given verbatim, coincide at some points with ours. Some of these were adultery, bigamy, insanity. "O, but frigiditas is the fairer way, gentlemen."[5]

Cosmetics were well known to the Elizabethan woman. She may not have been acquainted with face lifting, but she had at her finger tips almost every other conceivable artifice to help her to retain her youth. Some women took an entire morning to complete their dress and make-up. With the exception of the peruke or wig, which could be any color from

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1. Op. cit., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 79, Act II, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Bartholomew Fair, Vol. II, p. 183, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 247, Act V, Sc. 2.
4. Ibid., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 195, Act V, Sc. 1.
5. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 552, Act V, Sc. 1.

blue to yellow, the make-up was intended to achieve a natural aspect.

Mrs. Fitzdottrel. You make me paint (blush), sir.

Wittipol. They are fair colours,
Lady, and natural![1]

Jonson's song shows his ideas concerning a woman's appearance.

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast,
Still to be powdered, still perfum'd,
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all the adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.[2]

Cosmetics were sold at the apothecary shop.

> Then, for your ladies, the most proud, witty creatures all things apprehending, nothing understanding, curious maintainers of fools, mercers, and minstrels, costly to be kept, miserably keeping, all disdaining but their painter and apothecary, 'twixt whom and them there is this reciprock commerce, their beauties maintain their painters, and their painters their beauties.[3]

Make-up was applied in the privacy of a woman's room.

Clerimont. A pox of her autumnal face, her pieced beauty! there's no man can be admitted till she be ready, now-a-days, till she has painted, and perfumed, and wash'd, and scour'd....

Truewit. ...I love a good dressing before any beauty o' the world. O, a woman is then like a delicate

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1. Op. cit., The Devil is an Ass, Vol. II, p. 293, Act II, Sc. 2.
2. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. II, p. 493, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Cynthia's Revels, Vol. I, p. 207, Act IV, Sc. 2.

garden; nor is there one kind of it; she may vary every hour; take often counsel of her glass and choose the best. If she have good ears, show them; good hair, lay it out; good legs, wear short clothes; a good hand, discover it often: practise any art to mend breath, cleanse teeth, repair eyebrows; paint and profess it.

Cler. How! publicly.

True. The doing of it, not the manner: that must be private.... Is it for us to see their perukes (wigs) put on, their false teeth, their complexion, their eyebrows, their nails?[1]

The dandy was just as meticulous concerning his dress as was the woman. Italy was his style dictator. Jonson had been annoyed so often with his actions in the theatre, where, frequently, he sat upon the stage to exhibit himself, that he despised his kind.

> ...if in all this front
> You can espy a gallant of this mark,
> Who to be thought one of the judicious,
> Sits with his arms thus wreath'd, his hat pull'd here,
> Cries mew, and nods, then shakes his empty head.[2]

"...Rich apparel has strange virtues; it makes him that hath it without means, esteemed for an excellent wit:...takes possession of your stage at our new play."[3] A dandy who could not keep his apparel up to the latest in fashion was in anguish.

Macilente. Ay, there's a newer edition come forth.

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1. Op. cit., Silent Woman, Vol. I, pp. 492-3, Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Ibid., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 63, induction.
3. Ibid., p. 93, Act II, Sc. 2.

Fungoso. 'Tis but my hard fortune! Well I'll have my suit
changed.[1]

Jonson lashed out at those he scorned as brainless popinjays.

...who by diet
Of meats and drinks, his temperate exercise,
Choice music, frequent baths, his hoary shifts
Of shirts and waistcoats, means to immortalize
Mortality itself.[2]

His brains lighter than his feather already, and his tongue more subject to lye than that is to wag; he sleeps with a musk-cat every night, and walks all day hang'd in pomander chains for penance; he has his skin tann'd in civet, to make his complexion strong.[3]

The would-be scholar also received Jonson's derision. Jonson had a great deal of respect for true learning. Indeed, he dedicated Volpone: "To the most noble and equal sisters the two famous universities."[4] Regarding the man who pretended great knowledge, he had for that sort nothing but contempt.

Sir Politick. Fellows to mount a bank. Did your instructor
In the dear tongues, never discourse to you
Of the Italian mountebanks?...
They are the only knowing men of Europe!
Great general scholars, excellent physicians,
Most admired statesmen, profest favourites.[5]

Sir Politick in his effort to assert his learning gave a rather erroneous definition of a mountebank. Some men who

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1. Op. cit., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 92, Act II, Sc. 2.
2. Ibid., The Magnetic Lady, Vol. II, p. 516, Act I, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 78, Act II, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., Volpone, Vol. I, p. 400, dedication.
5. Ibid., p. 423, Act II, Sc. 1.

professed wisdom never got beyond the first page, said Jonson.

Colonel Tipto. Cyclometria, I read--
Lord Beaufort. The title only.
Lord Latimer. And indice.[1]

...Let's talk fustian a little and gull them; make them believe we are great scholars.... Aristotle in his daemonologia, approves Scaliger for the best navigator in his time; and in his hypercritics, he reports him to be Heantontimorumenos:--you understand Greek, sir?[2]

The Elizabethan barber was a physician and dentist as well as a barber. His shop could be distinguished on the outside by the barber pole and a basin, which caught the blood the barber let when he was acting as surgeon. Within his shop gossip kept his customers informed of local news; the barber shop was, in fact, the center of gossip. The barber kept musical instruments to amuse his customers while they waited.

The barber could take stitches in cuts. "You should have seen me unrip their noses now, and have sent them to the next barber's to stitching."[3] The barber gave pills, cured "botches and burns."[4] He used curling irons. He was supposed to impart bits of gossip as he trimmed and shaved. A barber who was silent was rarely met with. "The fellow trims him silently...and that continence in a barber, he thinks so eminent a nature, as it has made him thief of his counsel."[5]

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1. Op. cit., The New Inn, Vol. II, p. 451, Act II, Sc. 2.
2. Ibid., Every Man Out of His Humour, Vol. I, p. 99, Act III, Sc. 1.
3. Ibid., The Poetaster, Vol. I, p. 260, Act III, Sc. 1.
4. Ibid., Silent Woman, Vol. I, p. 521, Act III, Sc. 2.
5. Ibid., p. 495, Act I, Sc. 1.

Having completed the discussion of morals and manners as they were treated in Jonson's comedies, we should be interested in a brief discussion of the way in which his followers treated customs in their comedies.

Five years after Jonson's death the theatres were closed by the Commonwealth for a period of eighteen years (1642-1660). When the theatre was restored, it came into being at a time when society prided itself upon its intellect and elegance. Mockery, wit, clever speech, and a satirical interpretation of manners were fashionable. Hence, there was a revival of Jonson's satirical comedy of humours. At first, the satirical note was aimed at the Puritans. Later it enveloped the customs of society in general.

The comedy of Sir George Etheredge (1634?-1690?) satirized the manners of a carefree life. Etheredge, therefore, was writing a comedy of manners rather than a comedy of humour as was Jonson's. There is more of an ironical than satirical touch in Etheredge's writing. Sir Fopling Flutter in The Man of Mode[1] a dandy infatuated with French fashion, was created without any intense moral feeling on the part of the dramatist in contrast with Jonson's Fastidious Brisk[2] or Sir Diaphanous Silkworm.[3] Etheredge took manners as a whole and

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1. David Harrison Stevens, ed., Types of English Drama (Ginn and Co., Boston, 1923), The Man of Mode by Sir George Etheredge.
2. Ben Jonson's Plays, Every Man Out of His Humour.
3. Ibid., The Magnetic Lady.

caught the spirit of his times in his comedies rather than isolating individual characteristics of the period for ridicule, as Jonson did.

William Wycherley (1640?-1716?) is more like Jonson in that he does isolate individual traits. He felt that the amorality of his period needed more than a mere reproduction in comedy, and in his bitterness he almost loses sight of the human attributes of his characters, exemplifying in them one single trait. Nevertheless, Wycherley has given us a true social picture of the fashionable centers of life in his day. There is a certain brutality in Wycherley's repartee which goes farther than the mere frankness of speech found in Jonson.

Like Wycherley, William Congreve had a respect for gentility. Jonson gave us portraits of all classes of people, and he was not prejudiced towards any particular social rank. Congreve (1670-1729) combined the best in Etheredge and Wycherley to perfect his comedy of manners. He was not interested in single traits as were Jonson and Wycherley, except in the case of very superficial ones such as mannerisms in speech.

Briefly, we may sum up the chief differences between Jonson and his followers in three statements. In the first place, Jonson was writing comedies of humour, which emphasized one particular frailty of his times in each comedy. Secondly,on the other hand,Jonson's scope of society and its various strata was far broader than in the Restoration comedies. In

the third place, Jonson's satire was more distinct and far keener than that of his followers who specialized in gay repartee.

In conclusion, let us look at the method which Jonson used in writing his comedies. He was primarily a satirist; he considered it to be his mission to ridicule the morals and manners of his day. His vivid caricatures of Justice Overdo in Bartholomew Fair and of Sir Politick Would-be in Volpone show Jonson's desire to reform the hypocrisy of his fellow men. Jonson went beyond this and attacked, personally, those among the authors of his time whom he disliked, as in Cynthia's Revels. On the other hand, he condemns the general practises of society, as astrology in the Alchemist. Satire as humour had been seen in English drama before Jonson's day, but, as a mode of reformation, it realized its heights in Jonson's comedies.

Ben Jonson's witty dialogue, his trenchant observations give us a keen insight into the customs of Elizabethan times. Because of this satire, Jonson must of a necessity be more realistic in his treatment of drama, and hence more adaptable to a study of morals and manners of his age than contemporary authors.

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SUMMARY

Drama is adaptable to a study of the morals and manners of people, because drama in the beginning was simply a ceremonial custom of people, which, in turn, became the mirror to reflect thoughts and actions of people. Comedy, in particular, is appropriate for such a study, because it shows the incongruous actions of people in achieving the essentially comic spirit.

Ben Jonson was a man of strong likes and dislikes; in consequence, his comedies demonstrate more keenly the customs of his age than do those of his contemporaries, such as Shakespeare, Dekker, or Beaumont and Fletcher, who were writing primarily to please rather than to educate or reform their audiences.

Although more is known concerning Jonson's life than that of other Elizabethan dramatists, the important facts which we glean from his biography are few. But we do realize that an environment such as Jonson had, including youthful hardship, wars, poverty, jail, and court favor, would result in a dominant personality. Such a person would have a knowledge of all of the social strata of his times and would not be afraid to give their customs his stamp of approval or disapproval.

Among the comedies which he wrote, certain ones will be remarkable for Jonson's interpretations of the customs of his

age; others will be less valuable in this respect. A study of all of them is necessary in order to obtain information concerning his age. The comedy containing the fewest references to manners may divulge an obscure, but important point.

The construction of Jonson's comedies is adaptable to a study of morals and manners, since the interest lies not in the plot, but rather in the deeds of the characters and the situations in which they find themselves. This fact tends to emphasize the allusions to customs.

The philosophy of Jonson's contemporaries and the historical reasons for their attitude towards life should be the first consideration in a study of his age.

Since the center of Elizabethan life was the city, namely London, city amusements would be of greater interest to the student of Elizabethan society and, for the same reason, he will find more references to urban life than rural life in Jonson's plays.

Although the student may consider rural amusements, hunting and rustic festivals more typical of the age, he will find country life in Jonson's time less clearly defined, somewhat scorned by Elizabethan writers, and certainly not so indicative of the period as city life.

The Elizabethans delighted in, but did not worship, music. Rhythm was for everyone, not for a select few who understood it. It could be compared to the jazz of today, not to operatic works or the symphony.

The Renaissance in England demonstrated an advancement of culture in many respects; but people were reluctant to forget their superstitions and, in general, medieval ideas of science prevailed.

There were certain types of Elizabethan people mentioned by Jonson who play an important part in the life of his times. Jonson's ideas of women, dandies, scholars, and barbers are particularly pertinent to a study of morals and manners.

The comedy writers who came after Jonson depicted aristocratic life of their times with a satirical undertone. Consequently Restoration comedy was not dissimilar to the comedy of Ben Jonson.

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